Meeting of the National Security Advisors of USA and India

5503. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting of the National Security Advisors of the USA and India was recently held for fostering closer service to service cooperation and relations between Indian and US armed forces; and

(b) if so, the outcome thereof and the course of action charted out therein?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The US National Security Advisor Mr. Sandy Berger had a meeting with Shri Brajesh Mishra, Principal Secretary to PM and National Security Advisor of India on the forenoon of March 21, 2000, to discuss bilateral and regional issues of common interest, in preparation to the meeting between the Prime Minister of India and President Clinton, later the same day. There was no specific discussion of defence related issues during the meeting.

Failure of Engines of MIG-29

5504. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister fo DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the squadrons of MIG-29 shipped to India between 1986 and 1990 failed to match the operational requirements of IAF and most of them remained grounded mostly due to failure of engines;

(b) if so, the details of audit reports in respect of these fighter aircrafts; and

(c) the number of MIG-29's that have crashed so far?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The aircraft has met the operational requirements of IAF. During the period 1987 to 1990 a number of engines were prematurely withdrawn and sent for repairs to the manufacturer. These withdrawals were mainly due to a minor technical defect, and damage due to foreign objects. These problems have since been overcome by instituting remedial measures and modifications. Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of 10th Lok Sabha examined all aspects of problems related to induction of MIG-29 and related to its utilisation/ maintenance in the initial period of usage of aircraft.

(c) A total of five (four fighters and one trainer) aircraft have crashed till date.